



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**EARLY NOMINATION DEADLINE FOR 2018 TRIPLE CROWN SERIES  
SET FOR SATURDAY, JAN. 20**

**Owners, Trainers Can Nominate Candidates Online at [www.TheTripleCrown.com](http://www.TheTripleCrown.com)**

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Thursday, Jan. 18, 2018)** – Nominations of talented and promising 3-year-old Thoroughbreds to compete in the races of the **2018 Triple Crown** – the **\$2 million Kentucky Derby Presented by Woodford Reserve** (Grade I), the **\$1.5 million Preakness** (GI) and the **\$1.5 million Belmont Stakes** (GI) – are due at the end of this week.

The early deadline for online, telephone or faxed nominations to the 2018 Triple Crown is **11:59 p.m. (all times Eastern) on Saturday, Jan. 20**. Each nomination **must be accompanied by payment of a fee of \$600** to make the individual Thoroughbred eligible to compete in any or all of Triple Crown contests.

A late nomination period, which requires the payment of \$6,000 for each nominated 3-year-old, will open at 12 a.m. on Sunday, Jan. 21 and continue through **Monday, March 19**.

The 2018 Triple Crown opens on Saturday, May 5 with the 144<sup>th</sup> running of the 1 ¼-mile Kentucky Derby at **Churchill Downs** in Louisville, Ky. The 143<sup>rd</sup> Preakness, its 1 3/16-mile second jewel, is set for Saturday, May 18 at **Pimlico Race Course** in Baltimore, Md. The 150<sup>th</sup> running of the Belmont Stakes, the series' 1 ½-mile final leg, is scheduled for Saturday, June 9 at **Belmont Park** in Elmont, N.Y.

The Triple Crown races of 2017 were the second consecutive series in which each of the races had a different winner. **Always Dreaming** opened the series with victory in the Kentucky Derby, but the Preakness was won by **Cloud Computing**, who had not competing the first jewel of the Triple Crown. The 2017 Triple Crown was completed with a victory by **Tapwrit** in the Belmont Stakes.

The most recent horse to sweep the Triple Crown races and to win more than one of the events in a single season is **Zayat Stables'** homebred **American Pharoah**, who took all three races in 2015 for the Hall of Fame duo of trainer **Bob Baffert** and jockey **Victor Espinoza**. American Pharoah was only the 12<sup>th</sup> 3-year-old, and the first since **Affirmed** in 1978, to sweep the American Triple Crown series. The 37-year gap between the Triple Crown triumphs by American Pharoah and Affirmed was the longest in the history of the series that dates to 1919, when **Sir Barton** became the first Thoroughbred to win all three classic races.

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All Triple Crown nominations made by traditional mail during the early phase **must be postmarked by the Jan. 20 closing date. Nominations can easily be made online at [www.TheTripleCrown.com](http://www.TheTripleCrown.com)**, by telephone with a designated representative from one of the three Triple Crown host tracks. **Online, telephone and fax nominations must be completed prior to the 11:59 p.m. deadline on Jan. 20.**

Last year's early phase of Triple Crown nominations attracted 419 horses. An additional six Thoroughbreds were made eligible during the late nomination period to raise the overall total to 425.

The Kentucky Derby field has been limited to 20 starters since 1975 and the horses that enter the starting gate for its 2018 renewal will again be determined by points earned in the **"Road to the Kentucky Derby"** eligibility system, which debuted in 2013. If entries to the Derby total more than the maximum field of 20, up to four "also eligible" entrants will be permitted. If one or more entrants scratch from the 20-horse Kentucky Derby field prior to 9 a.m. Friday, May 4, the also-eligible horse or horses with highest preference in the "Road to the Kentucky Derby" system assume the empty stalls in the starting gate.

The Preakness is limited to 14 starters and the Belmont Stakes permits a maximum field of 16 horses.

Three-year-olds that were not nominated to the Triple Crown during either the early or late nomination phases have a final opportunity to become eligible for the races through payment of a **supplemental nomination fee**. Due at the time of entry for either the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness or the Belmont Stakes, the supplemental fee process makes a horse eligible for the remainder of the Triple Crown series. A supplemental nomination at the time of entry to the Kentucky Derby requires payment of \$200,000. The fee is \$150,000 if paid prior to the Preakness or \$50,000 at time of entry to the Belmont Stakes.

Churchill Downs adjusted its entry process in 2014 to permit horses that are made supplemental nominations prior to the Kentucky Derby to be treated the same as original nominees. If one or more supplemental nominees possess sufficient "Road to the Kentucky Derby" points to qualify for the Derby field, they will be allowed to start over original nominees that possess lesser qualifications. Under its previous policy, Churchill Downs gave preference in all cases to early and late Triple Crown nominees.

The 12 winners of the Triple Crown are Sir Barton (1919), **Gallant Fox** (1930), **Omaha** (1935), **War Admiral** (1937), **Whirlaway** (1941), **Count Fleet** (1943), **Assault** (1946), **Citation** (1948), **Secretariat** (1973), **Seattle Slew** (1977), **Affirmed** (1978) and American Pharoah (2015).

Information on the Triple Crown nomination process – including a link to a print-and-mail nomination form – is available at [www.theTripleCrown.com](http://www.theTripleCrown.com).

Representatives of the Triple Crown host tracks include:

- **Churchill Downs:** Racing Secretary **Ben Huffman** at (502) 638-3820 or [Ben.Huffman@KyDerby.com](mailto:Ben.Huffman@KyDerby.com) ... **Kelly Danner** at (502) 638-3825 or [Kelly.Danner@KyDerby.com](mailto:Kelly.Danner@KyDerby.com) ... Fax: (502) 638-3915;
- **Pimlico:** Director of Racing/Racing Secretary **Georganne Hale** at (800) 638-1859 or [ghale@marylandracing.com](mailto:ghale@marylandracing.com) ... Stakes Coordinator **Coleman Blind** at the same number or via email at [cblind@marylandracing.com](mailto:cblind@marylandracing.com) ... Fax: (410) 542-1221;
- **Belmont Park:** Senior Vice President of Racing Operations **Martin Panza** at (718) 659-4241 or [mpanza@nyrainc.com](mailto:mpanza@nyrainc.com) ... Stakes Coordinator **Andrew Byrnes** at (718) 659 4217 or via email at [abyrnes@nyrainc.com](mailto:abyrnes@nyrainc.com).

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